

Gregory Optical Notice of Privacy Practices

This notice describes how medical information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully. If you have any questions, please contact our office.

Gregory Optical is required by law to:

- Maintain the privacy of your protected health information;
- Give you this notice of our duties and privacy practices regarding health information about you;
- Follow the terms of our notice that is currently in effect.

HOW Gregory Optical MAY USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION:

Described as follows are the ways *Gregory Optical* may use and disclose health information that identifies you (HI). Except for the following purposes, we will use and disclose HI only with your written permission. You may revoke such permission at any time by writing to us and stating that you wish to revoke permission you previously gave us.

Treatment. *Gregory Optical* may use and disclose HI for your treatment and to provide you with treatment-related health care services. For example, we may disclose HI to doctors, nurses, technicians, or other personnel, including people outside our office, who are involved in your medical care and need the information to provide you with medical care.

Payment. *Gregory Optical* may use and disclose HI so that we may bill and receive payment from you, an insurance company, or a third party for the treatment and services you received. For example, we may give your health plan information so that they will pay for your treatment. However, if you pay for your services yourself (e.g. out-of-pocket and without any third party contribution or billing), we will not disclose your HI to a health plan if you instruct us not to do so.

Health Care Operations. *Gregory Optical* may use and disclose HI for health care operation purposes. These uses and disclosures are necessary to make sure that all of our patients receive quality care and to operate and manage our office. For example, we may use and disclose Information to make sure the care you receive is of the highest quality. Subject to the exception above if you pay for your care yourself, we also may share information with other entities that have a relationship with you (for example, your health plan) for their health care operations.

Appointment Reminders, treatment alternatives & health related benefits & services. *Gregory Optical* may use and disclose HI to contact you and remind you that you have an appointment with us. We may also use and disclose HI to tell you about treatment alternatives or health-related benefits and services that may be of interest to you. We will not, however, send you communications about health-related or non-health related products or services that are subsidized by a third party without your authorization.

Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care. When appropriate, *Gregory Optical* may share HI with a person who is involved in your medical care or payment for your care, such as your family or a close friend. We also may notify your family about your location or general condition or disclose such information to an entity assisting in a disaster relief effort.

Research. Under certain circumstances, *Gregory Optical* may use and disclose HI for research. For example, a research project may involve comparing the health of patients who received one treatment to those who received another, for the same condition. Before we use or disclose HI for research, the project will go through an approval process. Even without approval, we may permit researchers to look at records to help them identify patients who may be included in their research project or for other similar purposes, as long as they do not remove or take a copy of any HI.

Fundraising and Marketing. HI may be used for fundraising communication, but you have the right to opt-out of receiving such communications. Except for the exception detailed above, uses and disclosures of HI for marketing purposes, as well as disclosures that constitute a sale of HI, require your authorization if we receive any financial remuneration from a third party in exchange for making the communication and we must advise you that we are receiving remuneration.

Other Uses. Other uses and disclosures of HI not contained in this notice may be made only with your authorization.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS:

As required by law, *Gregory Optical* will disclose HI when required to do so by federal, state or local law.

To Avert a Serious Threat to Health or Safety. We may use and disclose HI when necessary to prevent a serious threat to your health and safety or the health and safety of the public or another person. Disclosures, however, will be made only to someone who may help prevent the threat.

Business Associates. We may disclose HI to our business associates that perform functions on our behalf or provide us with services if the information is necessary for such functions or services. For example, we may use another company to perform billing services on our behalf. All of our business associates are obligated to protect the privacy of your information and are not allowed to use or disclose any information other than as specified in our contract.

Organ and Tissue Donation. If you are an organ donor, we may use or release HI to organization that handle organ procurement or other entities engaged in procurement; banking or transportation of organs, eyes, or tissues to facilitate organ, eye or tissue donation; and transplantation.

Military and Veterans. If you are a member of the armed forces, we may release HI as required by military command authorities. We also may release HI to the appropriate foreign military authority if you are a member of a foreign military.

Public Health Risks. We may disclose HI for public health activities. These activities generally include disclosures to prevent or control disease, injury or disability; report births and deaths; report child abuse or neglect; report reactions to medications or problems with products; notify people of recalls of products they may be using; a person who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition; and the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect or domestic violence. We will only make the disclosure if you agree and when required or authorized by law.

Health Oversight Activities. We may disclose HI to a health oversight agency for activities authorized by law. These oversight activities include, for example, audits, investigations, inspections, and licensures. These activities are necessary for the government to monitor the health care system, government programs, and compliance with civil rights laws.

Lawsuits. If you are involved in a lawsuit or a dispute, we may disclose HI in response to a court or administrative order. We also may disclose HI in response to a subpoena, discovery request, or other lawful process by someone else involved in the dispute, but only if efforts have been made to tell you about the request or to obtain an order protecting the information requested.

Law Enforcement. We may release HI if asked by a law enforcement official if the information is: (1) in response to a court order, subpoena, warrant, summons or similar process; (2) limited information to identify or locate a suspect, fugitive, material witness, or missing person; (3) about the victim of a crime even if, under certain very limited circumstances, we are unable to obtain the person's agreement; (4) about a death we believe may be the result of criminal conduct; (5) about criminal conduct on our premises; and (6) in an emergency to report a crime, the location of the crime or victims, or the identity description or location of the person who committed the crime.

Coroners, Medical Examiners, and Funeral Directors. We may release HI to a coroner or medical examiner. This may be necessary, for example, to identify a deceased person or determine the cause of death. We also may release HI to funeral directors as necessary for their duties. **National Security and Intelligence Activities.** We may release HI to authorized federal officials for intelligence, counter-intelligence, and other national security activities authorized by law.

Protective Services for the President and Others. We may disclose HI to authorized federal officials so they may provide protection to the President, other authorized persons, or foreign heads of state, or to conduct special investigations.

Inmates or Individuals in Custody. If you are an inmate of a correctional institution or under the custody of a law enforcement official, we may release HI to the correctional institution or law enforcement official. This release would be if necessary; (1) for the institution to provide you with health care; (2) to protect your health and safety or the health and safety of others; or (3) the safety and security of the correctional institution.

YOUR RIGHTS: You have the following rights regarding HI *Gregory Optical* may have about you:

Right to Inspect and Copy. You have a right to inspect and copy HI that may be used to make decisions about your care or payment for your care. This includes medical and billing records, other than psychotherapy notes. To inspect and copy this HI, you must make your request, in writing, to our office.

Right to Amend. If you feel that HI we have is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as the information is kept by or for our office. To request an amendment, you must make your request, in writing, to our office.

Right to an Accounting of Disclosures. You have the right to request a list of certain disclosures we made of HI for purposes other than treatment, payment and health care operations or for which you provided written authorization. To request an accounting of disclosures, you must make your request, in writing, to our office. **Right to Request Restrictions.** You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the HI we use or disclose for treatment, payment, or health care operation. You also have the right to request a limit on the HI we disclose to someone involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that we not share information about a particular diagnosis or treatment with your spouse. To request a restriction, you must make your request, in writing, to our office. **We are not required to agree to all such requests.** If we agree, we will comply with your request unless the information is needed to provide you with emergency treatment.

Right to Request Confidential Communication. You have the right to request that we communicate with you about medical matters in a certain way or at a certain location. For example, you can ask that we only contact you by mail or a work. To request confidential communication, you must make your request, in writing, to our office. Your request must specify how or where you wish to be contacted. We will accommodate reasonable requests.

Right to a Paper Copy of This Notice. You have the right to a paper copy of this notice. You may ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time. Even if you have agreed to receive this notice electronically, you are still entitled to a paper copy of this notice. You may obtain a copy of this notice at our website, www.gregory-optical.com. To obtain a paper copy of this notice please request it in writing.

Right to Electronic Records. You have the right to receive a copy of your electronic health records in electronic form.

Right to Breach Notification. You have the right to be notified if there is a Breach of privacy such that you HI is disclosed or used improperly or in an unsecured way.

CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE: *Gregory Optical* reserve the right to change this notice and make the new notice apply to HI we already have as well as any information we receive in the future. We will post a copy of our current notice at our office. The notice will contain the effective date on the first page, in the top right-hand corner.

COMPLAINTS: If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a complaint with our office or with the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services. All complaints must be made in writing. **You will not be penalized for filing a complaint.**

I acknowledge having been provided this Notice. Signed: _____